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SUBJECT: UN SECURITY COUNCIL BRIEFING BY SRSG KAI EIDE AND
DEBATE

11. (U) Summary: On September 29, the Security Council held a quarterly debate on UNAMA. SRSG Kai Eide briefed the Council on behalf of UNAMA concentrating on elections, new government formation, reconciliation, security and international coordination. Afghan Foreign Minister Spanta's remarks focused on elections and the need for long-term and comprehensive stabilization and humanitarian, reconstruction and developmental assistance. All Security Council members spoke at the debate, most calling for continued patience as the Independent Election Commission and Electoral Complaints Commission continue to investigate and adjudicate incidents of fraud and certify final election results, and the need for the new Afghan government to form quickly. Many welcomed UNAMA's development of benchmarks and indicators of progress as a useful metric for the Security Council to measure progress in Afghanistan. End summary.

INTERVENTIONS BY UNAMA & AFGHANISTAN

12. (U) In the September 29 quarterly Security Council debate on the UN Assistance Mission for Afghanistan (UNAMA) SRSG for UNAMA Kai Eide's briefing focused on the near-term presidential election certifications which are expected to be announced in early October, the need for rapid formation of a new government and agenda, reconciliation, security, and continued coordination of the priorities and allocation of international development assistance. Eide emphasized that the election campaign included public engagement and a real debate between political alternatives that was entirely new for Afghanistan. He stressed that while fraud and irregularities have been committed by election officials, candidates, supporters and government officials, the Electoral Complaint Commission and Independent Election Commission are on track, working together, to certify the final election results. Eide called on the future Afghan president to appoint a government which can inspire confidence in its citizenry and the international community and to formulate an agenda which corresponds to the concerns of the people - a government that intensifies the struggle against corruption, strengthens respect for the rule of law, ends the culture of impunity and promotes social and economic justice. He underscored that training, mentoring and equipping of the Afghan army and police cannot be a U.S. effort alone, and called for wider engagement from other countries in both manpower and financial resources. The SRSG also referenced calls for a new international conference on Afghanistan, and suggested it take place in Kabul, at the ministerial level and in the established JCMB format to provide a strong political signal that would underscore the Afghan government's assumption of greater responsibilities for the country's future with the international community gradually taking on a more supporting role.

13. (U) Afghan Foreign Minister Spanta took the floor next and began by thanking the international community for the strong support shown to Afghanistan after decades of instability.

He called the recent election an "important milestone" in his country's ongoing democratic transformation, while also acknowledging the voting fraud and irregularities which took place. He urged Council members to focus on the big picture, which was that elections had been held, and stated that the international community's respect and support for Afghanistan and its final electoral decisions were necessary for the success of the new government. Minister Spanta also discussed the need to hold an international conference in Kabul, in the near future, to discuss good governance, reintegration of insurgents into civilian life, and regional cooperation. Minister Spanta called Afghanistan's relationship with Pakistan of the "utmost importance" and noted there has been a cooperative atmosphere between Afghanistan and the new civilian government in Pakistan in recent months. In closing, the Minister stated that UNAMA must play a leading role in shaping Afghanistan's future, and that they are currently well-positioned for this important role.

INTERVENTIONS BY SECURITY COUNCIL MEMBERS

14. (U) Most delegations welcomed the news of the recent elections in Afghanistan, despite the reports of irregularities, and called for patience as the Independent Election Commission and the Electoral Complaints Commission continue to investigate and adjudicate incidents of fraud and certify the final elections results. Representatives from Japan, Croatia, Austria, Burkina Faso, and Mexico conveyed full confidence in the Electoral Complaints Commission to quickly and successfully handle all fraud allegations. Costa

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Rica added that the number of complaints is alarming, and that the prolonged wait for election results is jeopardizing the success of the election. Likewise, the Russian representative expressed his country's hopes for a rapid conclusion of the elections process, and its expectation that the new government be rapidly formed. The delegations of Vietnam and Costa Rica expressed the desire that the lessons learned during this election be remembered in 2010, when parliamentary elections will take place in Afghanistan.

15. (U) Civilian casualties and targeting of humanitarian workers were condemned by the governments of Vietnam, Croatia, Austria, the United Kingdom, Libya, Mexico, Costa Rica, Uganda, and Russia. Most Council members welcomed General McChrystal's approach of prioritizing the protection of the civilian population. Russia recognized ISAF's renewed efforts to minimize civilian casualties but said such efforts were not sufficient, and concluded that civilian casualties remain too high and called for in-depth investigations in each situation where such casualties have occurred. Libya's statement was most critical of civilian casualties, in keeping with its past statements, and equated civilian casualties caused by ISAF to those killed at the hands of the Taliban. The Libyan deputy PermRep expressed his alarm at ISAF's failure to suppress insurgency forces, alleging that many Afghans join the insurgency not only as a result of social and political marginalization, but also as a direct reaction to the atrocities committed by international forces.

He declared that stability will require reintegration, and that a cease-fire with the Taliban is the first step towards this stability. He reiterated his feeling that ISAF's main objective should be to provide a stable setting for democracy to take root, and that the international community should concentrate on withdrawing forces as soon as possible.

(Comment: In the U.S. speech Ambassador DiCarlo responded by saying she wanted to register her objections to some of the Libyan comments, which she characterized as "unhelpful.")

16. (U) A number of Council members welcomed President Karzai's recent signing of the law prohibiting violence against women. Austria, Costa Rica, Burkina Faso, and the

United Kingdom expressed ongoing concern regarding the Shia Personal Status law which was noted as running counter to Afghan's constitution and to international agreements to which Afghanistan is signatory.

17. (U) Members welcomed the benchmarks included in the recently released UNAMA report as a more concrete way to measure progress in Afghanistan and the region as a whole. Representatives from Vietnam, Croatia, Austria, the United Kingdom, and Uganda specifically noted the utility of these benchmarks and their expectation that these benchmarks would be subject to further review and modification by the Afghan government and the international community through their representatives in Kabul.
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